Therefore, whenever there is a surplus of dairy products, exports are permitted.

**Opium Growers of Rajasthan**

143. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the losses suffered by the Opium growers in Jhalawad and other districts of Rajasthan since 1994-95 due to hailstorm and other natural calamities;

(b) if so, the estimated losses, so suffered;

(c) whether the 'pattas' of some opium growers particularly small farmers have been cancelled in Jhalawad districts;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken to assist the opium growers in that district for their rehabilitation ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Yes, Madam.

(b) Consequent to the damage to poppy crops in Rajasthan during the crop year 1994-95, 48 villages were declared to have suffered "partial damage" and 79 villages were declared "extensively damaged" under the licensing policy for the crop year 1995-96.

During the crop year 1995-96 also reports regarding damage to poppy crops were received in the State of Rajasthan but the damage was less as compared to the crop year 1994-95.

As for the crop year 1996-97, poppy crops have not matured as yet.

(c) Based on their performance during the crop year 1994-95, *pattas* of 3487 cultivators were not renewed during the crop year 1995-96 in Jhalawad District as the said cultivators failed to tender the prescribed Minimum Qualifying Yield for licence.

While determining the eligibility for licence the size of an individual cultivator's holding is no criterion.

In the crop year 1996-97 on licence for poppy cultivation has been cancelled on account of mere low yield.

(d) As stated in para 'c' above the concerned cultivators in District Jhalawad lost their licences in view of their failure to tender the prescribed Minimum Qualifying Yield of 46 kgs. or 30 kgs/hectare as the case may be for the crop year 1995-96. The Minimum Qualifying Yield for the said crop year was fixed at 46 kgs./ hectare whereas a lower Minimum Qualifying Yield of 30 kgs./hectare was fixed for villages declared to have suffered damage.

(e) No rehabilitation by way of grant of licence beyond the provisions of the Opium Licensing Policy is provided for by the Central Government since it would encourage leakage of opium into illicit channels.

Monetary compensation if any, can be provided for, by the concerned State Governments.

**Export of Pearls**

144. SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total value of Pearls exported during each of the last three years;

(b) whether the Government have formulated any scheme for the development of this industry with a view to increase the export;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH ) : (a) The total value of Pearls exported during the last three years is as follows :

(Value in US $ Million)

| Item | 93-94 | 94-95 | 95-96 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearls | 3.73 | 4.95 | 5.45 |

Source : DGCI&S

(b) and (c) In order to provide incentive for export of pearls, replenishment licences are issued at the rate of 65% of the FOB value of pearls (real ore/cultured) to the exporters. The Government also has taken a number of steps to boost exports of pearls which include fine tuning of Exim Policy to ensure easy availability of raw materials at internationally copetitive prices and encouragement to exporters to participate in international fairs/exhibition-cum-sale for promotion of Indian jewellery.

(d) Does not arise.

**Foreign Debt**

145. SHRI B.L. SHANKAR :
SHRI SYDAIAH KOTA :
SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the amount of foreign debt on India as on December 31, 1996;

(b) the amount of foreign debt taken from different countries during each of the last three years ending on March 31, 1996;

(c) the amount which was repaid and the interest paid thereon separately during the above period; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to minimise the foreign debt burden on the country ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM ) : (a) and (b) The latest estimates for